Moments in Mission
Welcoming the Stranger

Annual Donor Report
2016-2017

Sisters of the Presentation
of the Blessed Virgin Mary

In Joyful Service

“Each one of them is Jesus in disguise.”
- Mother Teresa
“For I was hungry and you fed me.”
(Matthew 25:35)

This verse is the essence of Presentation prayer, charism and mission. First and foremost, we look to God to feed our spiritual lives so that we may, in turn, reach out to those who hunger for spiritual hope and for basic needs.

A congregation’s charism can be defined as a grace given to carry out its mission. In our charism we are called by God whose love empowers us to respond as a faith community. By grounding all aspects of our lives in God’s love and in response to our call to serve others, we are able to live fully our mission and respond to the needs of those we serve.

Flowing from our charism, our mission is to go forth to any part of the world to work for justice, alleviate oppression and promote human dignity.

We are fed by our spiritual lives and inspired by our foundress, Nano Nagle, to go where the need calls most loudly. Through service to those in need, we are living out the mission of Jesus. By grounding this service in prayer, we are filled with a spirit of joy and love for those we serve.

Our partners are an extension of our service, and we continue to reach out with those who share our mission. We embrace a future that will see Presentation People joining together in keeping the Presentation mission and charism alive.

We invite you to share your prayer intentions with us at 605.229.8331 or wepray4u@presentationsisters.org.

For I was hungry and you fed me, I was thirsty and you gave me drink. I was a stranger and you welcomed me; naked and you clothed me. I was ill and you comforted me; in prison and you came to visit me.  Matthew 25:35-36

Front & Back Cover: Presentation Sisters and Presentation People continue to welcome our new neighbors from different cultures and faiths. See story on page 8.
When we say “justice is our work,” we mean “our” in an expansive and far-reaching sense. Not only are we partnering with local organizations, but we also partner with other Presentation Sisters and Presentation People worldwide to welcome the stranger among us so that we might hear and address the needs of all God’s people.

Sister Kathleen Bierne explains, “Our mission calls us to provide immediate assistance through direct service and also work toward systemic change that addresses deeper causes.” By collaborating with others, we are able to pair direct service with efforts to change flawed systems on a larger scale than might be accomplished by any single entity.

Locally, we engage in education and awareness through workshops, lobbying and other communication intended to make others aware of the needs of the less fortunate. Sister Pat Prunty shares, “I have heard people say how much they appreciate our partnership. Together we are able to use the skills/interests of many to implement strategies that address different social justice issues.”

In North America, we partner with those working for justice in the other congregations of Presentation Sisters from California to Newfoundland. While local priorities may be slightly different, we are often working on similar issues, such as human trafficking, immigration reform and abolishment of nuclear weapons. We are able to share with one another our successes and challenges, and we gain valuable skills and knowledge through this collaboration.

Globally, we belong to the International Presentation Association and, as such, are recognized as a non-governmental organization (NGO) at the United Nations. Our NGO representative, Sister Elsa Muttathu, has access to the various human rights mechanisms of the United Nations and is able to bring the concerns of those we serve to the attention of governments. She also advocates and monitors policies and encourages participation of Presentation People worldwide by sharing information and asking for input.

Pax Christi USA works for a more peaceful, just and sustainable world through the efforts of their members and in collaboration with other groups. We invite you to visit our social justice page on our website at www.presentationsisters.org to learn more about upcoming events and ways to get involved.
Leaving a Legacy

Success isn’t just what you accomplish in your life; it’s about what you inspire others to do.

– Anonymous

When you think of your legacy, what do you envision?

Often the thought goes to leaving the world a little better than how we found it, more peaceful, more just, greener and a healthier place for future generations.

As vowed religious women, we have dedicated our lives, inspired by our foundress, Nano Nagle, to work for justice, alleviate oppression and promote human dignity. The efforts of many coming together make it possible to do what none of us could do alone. We welcome the company on this path, and are grateful for your prayerful support and financial gifts that allow us to focus on the task at hand, making the world a better place.

We invite you to continue this journey with us in whatever capacity works best for you. If you are interested in learning more about ways to leave your legacy, we would be happy to discuss options with you. Leaving a lasting legacy, of any amount, can be very simple and will contribute to our continued mission, a mission shared by our partners, for years to come.

For more information, contact Brooke Nicholson Grote or Jen Rothenbuehler at 605-271-0468.
The Presentation Sisters are grateful to the donors listed in this annual report, as well as the individuals who prefer to remain anonymous, for their partnership over the past year. It is through your support that we are able to continue our ministry to those in need. It is our intention that this report accurately reflects the names of our donors from June 1, 2016 to May 31, 2017. We also remember in our prayers those whose names are marked with a cross (†) as they are our partners who are deceased.

We have established style guidelines to ensure consistency. If there is an error with your name, please let us know using the contact information listed on the back of this report.
A solidarity vigil for Dreamers and DACA recipients was recently held. We joined our voices with those of many other groups in the country who are asking for the protection of the young people, like Jose, in the DACA program.

Jose was brought to the United States from Guatemala with his parents when he was four years old and has had DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) since it was enacted in 2012. He graduated high school and works legally to support his family. Every two years he pays $495 to renew DACA and is fingerprinted and vetted by the Department of Homeland Security. He is frightened of the possibility of our government revoking DACA, which would leave him vulnerable for deportation, leaving his wife and three US citizen children. We walk with him through these uncertain times, pray and advocate for comprehensive immigration reform.
PRAYER
BUS TOUR

Prayer tours have been offered throughout the year in partnership with our Sisters at Caminando Juntos, the Multi-Cultural Center, Pax Christi Southeastern SD Chapter, UN Refugee Congress and SD Bread for the World. They are intended to bring solidarity to the community, while offering an opportunity to meet our neighbors with a variety of faiths and experience prayer in their worship space. Tours have included: local non-profit agencies working with refugees and immigrants, the Buddhist Meditation Temple, a Jewish Synagogue, the Muslim Community Center, and a Lakota Sweat Lodge. The time together has been life-giving and is uniting a larger family together for peace in our world.
The Presentation Sisters’ Social Justice Team works passionately toward the abolition of nuclear weapons. Engaging with Pax Christi, a group that works toward a more peaceful, just and sustainable world through prayer, study and action, is a way we can encourage leaders to continue to speak out as a peaceful voice for others.
World Refugee Day

We celebrated and embraced the diversity that many cultures bring to our neighborhoods and communities during World Refugee Day.

Sustainable Development Goals

Presentation Sisters worldwide are all committed to implementing the Sustainable Development Goals personally and with our mission partners. In the next 15 years the goals are designed to achieve three important things: end extreme poverty, fight inequality and injustice and fix climate change.
As we strive to welcome the stranger among us, we are also often welcomed by the stranger and are both enriched in this mission journey. This is frequently the case for Sister Myra Remily who, assisted by Sister Consuelo Covarrubias, ministers to the Hispanic community living in the northeast area of South Dakota.

Sister Myra has been called upon many times to assist Spanish-speaking mothers through their pregnancies. She is welcomed into the family as she translates for them during this preparation. The process of being a welcoming presence to those she serves is echoed in the welcoming of a new little stranger into these families. Sister explains, “I experience a special inner joy deep in my soul when I accompany these mothers. I feel close to these families ... I laugh with them and cry with them as they grow closer to this new life that enters their world. She or he is no longer a stranger to them, but a loving baby that belongs.”

Sisters Myra and Consuelo have continued to assist numerous families through advocacy with various governmental agencies, translation, mediation with employers and meeting basic needs. They also provide education to those in the region, including talking to classes at Presentation College about issues of immigration and justice.

The goal of this ministry is to help those who come as strangers to become self-sufficient. Much as the new baby was once a stranger but becomes a treasured member of the family, the sisters in this ministry are welcoming the new immigrant to become a valued member of the Aberdeen area.

“IT is always a joy having Sister Myra be a part of the OB care we provide our Hispanic non-English speaking OB patients. She is able to provide reassurance, support and education during their prenatal care and during the process of laboring that has been so helpful for not only the patients but also their significant others. She is a true asset to the care we can provide.

The feedback from families regarding their appreciation of the translation services she provides to our Hispanic patients has been wonderful.”

– Christine Stehly, MD
In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus identifies himself as the stranger, the hungry, the thirsty, the homeless, the immigrant. For the past 15 years, the ministry team at Caminando Juntos has strived to heed this example and see Jesus in every person who comes to the door.

As the only bilingual accredited representative in the state providing affordable immigration services, Sister Janet Horstman has been very busy with her work as an immigration specialist. Because of changes to United States policies affecting immigrants and refugees, there is a great deal of fear with many clients. Sister Janet is also partnering with national and local immigration groups to work out plans to aid Hispanic families with very real issues such as safety plans, knowing their rights and developing a power of attorney to safeguard their children. The sisters have not only the legal challenges to address, but also the need for pastoral skills as they walk with individuals and families who are distressed and concerned for their futures.

While all of this immigration work has taken precedence, the team continues the other areas of ministry. Sister Sheila Schnell, Caminando Juntos administrator and coordinator of English classes, has expanded the program to include dedicated lay partners as teachers and volunteers. Sister Pegge Boehm has broadened her role in networking with local justice groups and also teaches in the English program. Sister Jan Mengenhauser is a trained counselor and offers counseling under the auspices of Catholic Social Services to Latinos in serious life situations. She serves as the ministry’s first responder in cases of domestic abuse or crisis. Astrid Rosario, a native of Guatemala, is the Office Manager and Community Resource Provider. She provides a welcoming presence to all guests, assisting with the many needs and issues that lead Latinos to the ministry.

Elena came looking for a housekeeping or laundry job. She knows very little English and has limited computer skills, but she is a Permanent Legal Resident. Astrid, the resource manager at Caminando Juntos, assisted her with the job application process. The result: She’s working as a housekeeper with a local business.
Sister Virginia McCall has been living the mission to “willingly go forth to any part of the world” as she serves people in need in Kaoma, Zambia, Africa. The ministry strives to provide education and skills that will allow individuals and families to become self-sufficient.

Two ministry areas, the sewing project and the fish farm, provide necessary skills that not only allow people to earn a wage and provide food and basic needs for their families, they also supply goods for the community in the form of school uniforms, bedspreads and other items, as well as fish, chickens, vegetables and fruit. This ministry subscribes to the proverb: give people fish and they eat for a day; teach people to fish and they eat for a lifetime.

Another area of the ministry that provides a means for individuals to make a better life for themselves is the Redmond Loan Fund. Through this loan over 300 women have been able to attend workshops, learning to open or to expand a small business this past year. In addition, nearly 60 families have taken part in a chicken-rearing project. These businesses are feeding and clothing families, as well as enabling them to provide an education for their children.

Sister Virginia explains how the ministry has helped those in Kaoma: “I came to Zambia to plant seeds, never expecting to see them blossom. However, it is most humbling when someone goes down on their knees, tears in their eyes, saying ‘Thanks be to God! I never thought my daughter would go to high school,’ or ‘without this job I could never have my little girl living with me.’”

These women participated in our compost-making workshop. They have shared that if everyone would make compost, like their group has done, there would be no poverty in Zambia.
The Gospel of Matthew is alive in the work of the Good Samaritan Ministry as we minister in direct service to feed the hungry, clothe the naked and comfort the ill (Matthew 25:35-36). For over 50 years we have been providing temporary assistance to 30-40 adults and families across South Dakota each month. The goal of this ministry is to help our neighbors meet their most basic needs so they may get back on their feet during difficult times. To receive assistance, Sister Phyllis, Good Samaritan Ministry Coordinator, visits with the applicants, assessing their needs on a case-by-case basis. Often times she provides additional guidance and alternative resource opportunities prior to offering assistance. A committee gathers to approve requests based on recommendations, providing hope to those suffering with a hardship. Many of those who are served by this ministry have had health issues that may have made them unable to work for a lengthy period of time. One of these women is Sue who is undergoing chemotherapy and has not been able to work for a few months. Sue’s family got a shut-off notice from their electric company. The Good Samaritan Ministry was able to help pay the past due amount so that the family will continue to have electricity during this challenging time. Each time we help someone with a hand up we are modeling that which Jesus taught us as we live our charism and mission in the world today.

*Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms.*

– 1 Peter 4:10

Sister Phyllis Gill
Fund Coordinator
Catholic School Scholarship

One doesn’t have to come from another country or even another city to need a helping hand. Because of the generosity of our donors, we are able to assist those wanting a Catholic education for their children by providing scholarships to students attending Catholic schools in the Sioux Falls Diocese.

Education has long been at the forefront of our ministry efforts. Each of our ministries carries an education component and, as many of our sisters are former educators and school administrators, supporting educational opportunities through scholarships aligns with our belief in the power of education to shape the world.

Last year, approximately 200 students applied for scholarship assistance. A dedicated committee gathered to read and discuss each application form and essay regarding the value of Catholic education and how the scholarship would financially impact their family. In some instances families needed assistance because of a hardship, such as the family whose father could only work part time due to a disability. With another, a grandparent has custody of their grandchildren and a fixed income made sending the children to Catholic school financially difficult. Whatever the need, we are thankful to be able to provide the opportunities, and the thanks returned by the families assures us that the gift of Catholic education is cherished.

2017-2018
$1,500 Scholarship Recipients

Noah Anderson
Alexandra Bachar
Logan Bauer
Isaac Baustian
Jaylee Bock
Jonah Crowe
Miriam Dobbs
Andrea Estrada
Jayden Fitz
Neveah Gonzales
Tyree Gottsen
Stephanie Harvill
Miles Haubert
Drew Heumiller
Colby Hoffman
Keaton Johnson
Olivia Grace Johnson
Sierra Kokales
Joaquin Kolker
Rebecca Kota

Preston Laskowske
Macy LeGrand
Gabriel Lindeman
Isabella Madrigal
Alexis Madrigal Tapia
Julia Major
Avery Malimanek
Evelyn Martin
Reva McGaugh
Tory McKee
Brooklynn Milliron
Jaxton Peterson
John Michael Pujado
Walter B. Richardson
Jannier Ruiz-Raigoza
Matthew Scherschligt
Victor Valencia
Emily Velazquez
Colin Winberg
Isaac Zens

2017-2018
$750 Scholarship Recipients

Victoria Eschenbaum
Hunter Griffin
Elena Yellow Bird

“You have blessed our lives more than you can imagine!”
— PARENT

“You have blessed our lives more than you can imagine!”
— PARENT

“You have blessed our lives more than you can imagine!”
— PARENT

“You have blessed our lives more than you can imagine!”
— PARENT

“Thank you for your generous gift and promotion of Catholic Schools. I was so excited to read your letter and I am honored to accept this scholarship.”
— STUDENT

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“Thank you for your generous gift and promotion of Catholic Schools. I was so excited to read your letter and I am honored to accept this scholarship.”
— STUDENT
One way in which we are working to keep our mission alive is through modeling and teaching its value to young people at our leadership camps. These camps prepare young women to be servant leaders in their communities.

Since 1996 we have traveled to the Black Hills, where our camp has addressed the needs of junior high girls. We expanded this ministry to the Omaha area in 2007 by establishing our LIVE camp focused on Latina girls. Both camps offer a welcoming and safe environment which support and foster a sense of self-confidence necessary for developing leadership skills and Christian values at a vulnerable time in their lives. As peer pressure and societal influences make healthy, positive life choices difficult for young women to discern, the role modeling and skills learned at camp provide a strong foundation for when campers return to their homes and schools.

“Our teen women face a host of challenges. It could be bullying on social media, struggling with esteem issues, family concerns or lack of a real spiritual connection with God or a faith community. At the camp we provide a wholesome environment where cell phones are silenced and real time relating is enhanced. The campers experience a supportive climate where they share their deeper selves with others, find acceptance, foster teamwork/community and have reflective time to listen to the quiet voice of the Spirit. The counselors serve as role models, and campers often aspire to become junior counselors when they are eligible.”

– Sister Mary Thomas

Through each encounter we have with young people, we seek to offer support, education and the knowledge that each of us is a child of God and loved despite our faults. We want young women to know that they are valued and, no matter their circumstances, can have a beautiful Christian life. We encourage positive choices to fulfill their call to live fully as God’s children, a bright light in a world that sometimes seems dark.
“Your faith grows so much stronger and you learn so many new things [at camp], like what it means to be a leader and a true responsible woman. You sing, pray, dance and most importantly always have fun!”

“I had fun when I was doing the challenge course. It made me think never give up and you can do anything! Just have faith in yourself and you can do it.”

“This camp is such an amazing opportunity for girls to learn and grow in their faith, building and maintaining their relationship with God and others as well.”

“I have learned that in order to have faith, you must first open your heart to God.”

“I can’t leave this camp without saying thank you for everything.”

“Some things I have gotten out of camp this week are God is love, us Latinas are leaders, and we are all beautiful. This camp teaches us so many important things that we need to know in life.”

“This Camp has brought me closer to God and has left my soul on fire!”

“You have left a significant mark on me and the other girls. You have showed me what it’s like to be full of Christ’s spirit. Your light of Jesus has shown upon me and I would like to do the same!”
Events & Opportunities

Warm a Neighbor • Dress for Success
Women on the Prairie • Women’s Golf Tournament
Cinco de Mayo Fiesta • Human Trafficking Event
Prayer Partner • Green Aberdeen
Speaking Opportunities • Kids Against Hunger
Leadership Camp Breakfast • Youth Volunteer Day
Dear Presentation People,

Wow! As we look back and reflect on the past year we are humbled by your willingness to share the light that shines brightly in each of you as you give of your time, talents and treasures with us. Your partnership is vital to the growth and development of the work the sisters accomplish. The ideas and energy we gather together gives us great hope as we continue to recognize “Nano’s spark” in others as we share our mission and charism with those we meet.

In this past year, our team has focused on exploring mission in a new light and taking time to re-evaluate projects that we have routinely done. We want to ensure we are sharing our message in the best way, creating a positive impact. Many of you offered ideas and suggestions to strengthen the expansion of mission within our message and deepen connections along the way. We truly appreciate all your support!

In the year ahead, we are looking forward to continuing the momentum of welcoming all we meet, helping bridge partnerships where we collaborate with others in changing unjust systems and working for direct and systemic change. We share our gratitude with you as we walk this journey together, one step at a time, working to make the world a better place.

With love and mercy,

“Joy springs from a grateful heart.”
- Pope Francis
“Jesus teaches us another way: Go out. Go out and share your testimony, go out and interact with your brothers [and sisters], go out and share, go out and ask. Become the Word in body as well as spirit.”

— POPE FRANCIS